

BY WARY ALONG THE VINE.

"A little—just a minute—not at all
With truest fast"—O, magic brief!
Ah, foothill task, to mea-sure out
Love's value on a dainty leaf!

For as she pulled the latest leaf
With "not at all," I heard her say
"Ah, much you know, you silly dower,
He'll love me till his dying day."

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

20

DISCOUNTS

murder of Sheriff Napier in 1909, has just been arrested in Stanford, Ky. A reward of \$1,800 was offered for his arrest, but the terror inspired by him and a gang of desperate associates prevented his capture heretofore.

—

... "Jackie Pompey's Christmas," by Jennie Woodville, and the opening chapters of "Jack and Mrs. Brown," by the author of "Blindpits." The poetry is by Celia Thaxter, Emma Lazarus, and Edgar Fawcett, and the reviews are unusually numerous, comprising notices of all

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Down the staircase and over down, down, down, under the light of moon or sun, falling from a far land, and one knows, to a great sea where all the streams are one.

A bloom of little light upon the breast, When cold rain drops the sunless air below.

Never had reason broken on her rest, Her amorous heart dropt on her lover's face.

What time the sun throws wide its golden door, And kindles peak on peak to smother, And through the twinkling tree-tops trails the mist.

Rolling through listening glens that stream shall fill, Weeds not that shall stand upon the shore, And sorrow with oblivion shall shade, Till stream and sea, and mountains be no more.

FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DORA THORNTON," "WIFE IN RAIN ONLY," "A BRIDE FROM THE SEA," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.—(CONTINUED).

That evening, when Lady Carven was dressing for dinner, her faithful maid could hardly be satisfied; she brought out jewels, flowers, ornaments of all kinds. "Do wear them, my lady," she said, "if you would but let me help you more in your toilet! Lady Courtney is so beautifully dressed; do not let her have all the admiration."

The girl had grown so sorry for her young mistress that she sometimes ventured to speak familiarly to her. Hildred sat listlessly before the toilet table; neither jewels, flowers, nor dresses had the least interest for her.

"I think it is very probable that all the admiration will fall to her lot whether I take pains with my dress or not," she said musingly.

"My lady," returned the girl earnestly, "you do not know how beautiful you are—you do not indeed. If you would but take some little interest—you have a lovely figure and beautiful hair—if you would but care a little more!"

Lady Carven laughed good-temperedly; the girl's admiration was so sincere that she could not be angry.

"I will care more," she said, making a desperate effort to rouse herself. "What am I to do?"

Amice was all animation. She brought out a beautiful dinner-dress, a dress that looked like a soft black cloud tinged with golden light.

"Amber and black!" said Lady Carven. "Surely I am dark enough, Amice! Lord Carven likes everything about him bright and fair. I should wear something lighter if I mean to please him."

"You promise, my lady, that I should dress you as I liked to-day?"

"It does not matter," she said indifferently; and so the amber and black were worn.

Nothing could have suited her better. The low dinner-dress showed the exquisitely-moulded neck and shoulders, the rounded arm; it displayed the beautiful contour of a figure tall and graceful. The mass of dark, wavy hair was arranged in thick shining coils fastened with a diamond arrow; one dark crimson flower lay in her depths. A pearl necklace was clasped round the graceful throat, a brace let around one of the dimpled arms. Amice's pride was great; there might be a thousand ladies present—none would be so beautiful as hers.

Lady Courtney looked up in wonder as her lovely young mistress entered the drawing-room. She turned to the Earl, with whom she was most intimate—they had played together when children.

"How fairly people speak," she said. "I have heard that you were a great heiress, but that she was quite a plain little schoolgirl. I must congratulate you on the rare beauty of your wife."

"Little she certainly is not," returned the Earl laughingly. "My—my wife is tall!"

"And she is beautiful," said Lady Courtney. "She looks like a Spanish princess. You do not often see faces like hers in England—we are all red and white."

"So you ought to be," he replied; "I can as soon imagine a dark angel as admire a dark woman."

"You retain your old love for the blondes," said Lady Courtney. "I am a fair better judge; and I tell you that the fair pink-and-white faces of most English women would pale into insignificance before the rich bloom, the exquisite coloring, the dark lustrous eyes of your wife."

"I really ought to thank you in her name," he responded.

"You ought to love her very much, for she is worth loving," said Lady Courtney frankly.

"Has any one told you that I do not love her?" he asked.

"No, certainly not; but, though she is so beautiful, she does not look happy. Her eyes ought to be filled with sunshine—they are sad and dreary. It is not a happy face, Lord Carven."

But he had heard quite enough of the topic—his wife's face did not interest him. He looked at her with some curiosity after Lady Courtney had spoken, and for the first time he was impressed with her growing beauty. "Lady Alice has rightly described her," he said to himself—she is like a Spanish princess. She would be perfect if she had a mantilla and a fan."

Then he forgot all about it, and was soon busy talking over old Oxford days with Sir Charles.

It was not a happy face. Hildred took her place at the brilliantly-appointed table. She was perfectly calm and self-possessed. In her thoughtful consideration for others she made an admirable hostess, her tact and graciousness were beyond all praise. But there was not a happy face. She did not voluntarily join in the conversation—with a quick, flashing smile she answered when she was spoken to, but she seldom volunteered a remark, and when she was not speaking, when her face was in repose, there came over it an air of dreary languor, of sadness, of thought, painful to see in one so young.

"What can be wrong here?" thought Lady Courtney. "There is plenty of money—they are both young, both handsome—Saxon beauty and Spanish—why are they not happy?"—For, amongst all other gossip she had not heard the fact that Lord Carven had married for money and not for love.

It was a pleasant evening. The Earl found out another accomplishment of his wife—she was an almost perfect musician; she sang like one inspired. The love, the passion, the tenderness, that found vent in her ordinary life found vent in song.

The rich, low contralto voice was so beautiful that nothing he had ever heard, she sang like one whose whole soul is tuned to song. She had not yet to sweet music the poet's passionate words—

"O sweet love—she changed her tone—O sweet love, when thou art so near! In this the end, he left alone, To the thoughts and desires—"

She sang them with such sweet pathos. It was of herself she was thinking. Who was more forlorn than she—who more neglected?

"O sweet love, when thou art so near!"

"What charming music!" said Lady Courtney. "Whom is it? I do not remember to have heard it before, and I am familiar with most modern songs—where is it?"

"My own," replied Hildred. "Whenever I would please me very much, they always set themselves to music in my own mind."

"The words are so sad—To live forgotten, and die forlorn! How can they please one so young as you?"

"It is the fate of many," said Hildred slowly.

"It may be, but it will never be yours—You, Countess of Carven, young, gifted, beloved."

"There are many ways of dying," said Hildred. "It is more bitter than death to come to live without love; yet many live without it."

"You have strange thoughts for one of your age," she said, looking at her with a smile. "Dresses and jewels, balls and dances, would have been in your thoughts rather than ideas of life and love."

"Should you like like balls and dances very much?" said Hildred, trying to speak lightly—she had no great desire to reveal to a stranger the secrets of her life and heart.

"You never told me," said Lord Carven to his wife, "that you could sing so beautifully."

"Did not? Perhaps you never asked me if I could sing at all."

"I do not remember doing so," he said. "Have you any more such surprises?"

She looked up at him brightly.

"You seemed half horrified when I told you that I could speak German," she said. "I was afraid that you considered me a little mad."

"I shall never tell you any of mine."

With a glance half laughing, half haughty, she took up the sheet of music and sang a beautiful waltz. Lady Courtney looked curiously into the face of the Earl.

"Had you never heard your wife sing, really?" she asked.

"No, I had not indeed," he replied.

"If I were a man and had wood so sweet a songstress, I should have spent long hours over the piano," she said. "I thought you always liked music much?"

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"I must not let this happen again," he said. "To live here alone requires more strength of mind than I am possessed of."

It did not occur to him that he was not alone; that he had a fair young wife near him. He never thought of her at all. He would not have remembered her existence but that wandering aimlessly along the terrace, he saw her in the drawing-room.

He almost owned to himself that there could not have been a lovelier picture. Wishing to finish something she was reading, she had brought her book to the window and crossed down the stairs, a shining wealth of dark hair in which lay gleaming pearls, a flowing mass of purple velvet upon which the white arms shown like snow on a purple sea. The lovely figure, the graceful attitude, the picturesque dress, cut square in the front, leaving the white neck bare, the wide hanging sleeves, the slender white hands—all made a picture that he must have admired, had the subject been any other than the money lender's daughter.

Seeing her, he thought it was possible she understood something of billiards, although he never knew anything of the game. He saw him, and fancying in his manner that he wished to speak to her, she opened the window and went out to him.

"Will you be kind," he said with unusual thoughtfulness.

She went back to the drawing-room in search of a silver scarf that she used. She threw it carelessly over her head and shoulders, where it looked so picturesque and became her so well that he could not help noticing it.

"This dull work, being here alone," he said.

"It is dull for both of us," she replied briefly.

"Ah, yes! Do you know, I had quite forgotten you were alone as well. We must find it dull too. We will ask some nice people down at once, this kind of thing will never do. I wanted to ask you, do you know anything of billiards?"

"Billiards?" she repeated wonderingly. "Yes—many ladies play remarkably well. Lady Courtney does. It is such a great resource."

"Do you want me to play with you?" she asked quickly.

"Yes, I am bored to death. I am tired of smoking. I never read much, and there is nothing to do."

"Extraordinary," she cried—"nothing to do!"

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean nothing. I am very sorry. I have seen a billiard-table, but I have never played. I will try to learn, if you like."

"Beginners are generally very awkward," he said frankly. "I cannot think how it is that I have forgotten to ask any one over. I must not be so remiss again."

"Do you never amuse yourself," she asked.

"No. How can I? I am essentially a

solitary being. I feel little interest in myself."

"You would rather be amused than interested?" she asked.

He thought for half a minute before he answered.

"Yes," he said. "Yes, I prefer amusement to anything else."

"It is a great pity that you cannot imitate the kings of old, and keep a court jester with cap and bells."

Lord Carven looked at her. It was not surely possible that this wife of his, this money-lender's daughter, was presuming to be satirical with him. They walked down the terrace until they reached a rustic garden-seat, and with an air of utter exhaustion the Earl sat down. Hildred took her seat unasked by his side.

The night wind was sweeping round them, bending the tall chrysantheums, stirring the dying leaves—a sweet fresh wind that was so odorous as balm. The twilight was fast fading, the birds had long ceased to sing, there was a pleasant brooding sense of quietude.

"This is almost as good as a billiard-table," said Hildred laughingly; but the Earl shook his head.

"It may be for you," he replied; "but it is not for me."

"Lord Carven," said Hildred, "I thought has just struck me. We have been married—how long—since the third of August, and it is now October; and do you know that you have never called me by name? My schoolfellow would call me 'Dreda,' my father calls me 'Hildred.' You have so contrived as never to give me any name at all. You do not say 'Dreda,' 'Hildred,' 'Hildred,' or anything of the kind. How is it?"

"I cannot tell," he replied blankly. The question had evidently puzzled him.

"I do not expect you would ever care to use any pretty familiar loving name; but do you not think you might learn to use my name? Lady Courtney used to look at me, when you addressed me in that general kind of way as you. Could you not say 'Hildred'?"

"I really do not know," he replied; "it is an uncomfortable kind of name—'Hildred.'"

She raised her charming head with a haughty little gesture.

"Do you fancy so? I think you do not know what 'uncomfortable' means. I am rather proud of my name; it may be quaint, but it is not common. If you cannot say 'Hildred,' the Countess Lady Carven? I am tired of being spoken to so vaguely."

"I will not do it again, Lady Carven, if it annoys you," he said; and then there was silence between them, broken only by the sighing of the wind.

Would he let this hour pass without speaking freely to her? They were alone now—there was no one to listen. Surely he would break the ice of reserve that was between them; surely he would say something to her at last. This unnatural state of things could not last much longer. Sitting there side by side, husband and wife, they were as strangers, with a great cold between them. Would he speak to her now? Would he tell her why he was cold and reserved—why he never talked to her—why his wife was almost less than nothing to him? She could see no fairer chance than this. She raised her face, all bright with play of feeling, to his.

"Lord Carven," she said, "will you be very, very kind if I ask you a question?"

"No; without knowing what the question may be, I predict that—certainly not."

"This question has troubled me very much; it has been the one thing which I have pondered night and day—a question that I cannot answer, one that I feel is the very key to a secret."

"You alarm me with that long prologue. Briefly, what is your question, Lady Carven?"

"Briefly, it is this. Why did you marry me, Lord Carven?"

"Why did I marry you?" he echoed in astonishment.

"I ask you the question," she went on, "because I have watched you and studied you, and I am convinced at last that you did not marry me for love."

"Love?" he cried. "Why, what has that to do with it?"

"I thought," she continued, "that you had married me because you loved me. I knew that you were cold and uncommunicative; that you had no sympathy, little kindness; but I believed implicitly that you married me for love."

"I had never seen you—I saw you only once," he said, in astonishment.

"I know, I remember. Still, I repeat what I have said to you; I—I fancied—I am quite ashamed to tell you the truth, but I will do so—I fancied that you had seen me somewhere and liked me."

He laughed, but the laugh was not pleasant to her.

"Did you really think that?" he asked musingly. "Poor child!" Then he turned to her with sudden brightness. "You really mean to tell me, on your word of honor, that you did not know why I married you?"

She raised her fair, proud face to his. "I assure you most solemnly, I do not. It is the greatest puzzle I have ever had."

"Did your father tell you that I—I loved you?"

"No," she replied thoughtfully, "he did not. Indeed he assured me that love was not needful for happiness. He never said you loved me. He said you wanted to marry me."

"And what else? Go on. What else?"

"That was a grand position, in which I should be supremely happy."

"What else?" asked the stern voice.

"I hardly remember. That if I consented, his highest ambition would be gratified."

Lord Carven murmured some terrible words between his closed lips.

"Then he never told you why this marriage was forced upon me?"

"Forced?" she interrogated gently.

Perhaps the sudden paling of her lovely face startled him, or the sharp quiver of pain in her voice touched him.

"He—your father—never told you that he insisted on the marriage?"

"No, never," she replied, faintly.

"He never told you that he made it my only refuge from him—my only hope—my only alternative?"

"No, he never told me that."

"Then I will tell you now. He compelled me to marry you—and I begin to perceive that he has sacrificed you as well as myself."

"Sacrificed us?" she repeated. "You cannot mean the word."

"I do mean it, both for myself and you," he replied. "I will tell you, Lady Carven; it is right that you should know the truth. I have been a spendthrift and a prodigal. I have squandered a large fortune, and was deeply in debt. I owed your

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"No. How can I? I am essentially a

father the sum of sixty thousand pounds. I had married her to save my style. I was also deeply in debt to others. I had literally come to my last shilling; disgrace, ruin, poverty and shame were all before me. Your father had the management of my affairs, and when he asked him what I was to do, he told me that he had two hundred thousand pounds and a daughter. A low cry came from her lips, and she crossed her face with her hands.

"I am sorry to pain you," he said. "I am sorry to distress you—but it is better that you should know the real truth. Your father is ambitious; his hopes were fixed on your marriage. He offered me the alternative—I could choose beggary, ruin, shame, disgrace, the total annihilation of my house and name, or I could choose the money and marry you. I told him that I did not feel inclined to marry, that I had no affection for you, and I implored him to find some other way out of the difficulty. He refused, and you know the result. Fear in mind though, that I am most deeply grateful to you. Your father has saved me from ruin. I am most deeply grateful to you; but it is best that you should know the truth."

"Yes," she agreed despairingly. "It is best."

She drew her hands from her face and looked at him. What nature of man could have been that the anguish and despair on that girlish face did not touch him?

"Then you have never loved me, never cared for me?" she said, looking at him.

"No, I am grateful to you; I can say no more."

The words that haunted her came back to her. "Let me die!"

He saw her draw the heavy shawl round her shoulders and shudder, as though she were seized with violent cold.

"I feel now," he said, "that it was a cruel thing to do. You are young, and your whole life is before you. At first I thought and believed that you understood everything—that you were as ready as I to give yourself and your money in exchange for my life; I thought, that you, through him, knew the full value of the estate and everything on it—that you knew all the house contained—that you were as keen and shrewd as he was. I misjudged you—I beg your pardon for it. For some time past I have fancied that in thinking as I did I was mistaken. Now I know it, and am glad to know it. I am sorry that you were sacrificed to me."

"Did you—do you—pray do not be angry with me," she said—"did you love any one else?"

"I have been amongst fair women what a butterfly is amongst flowers," he replied. "I have loved not one, but a hundred. I might say I have had as many loves as there are days in the year."

"But the one great love of your life—the love that is given only once—have you given that?" she asked.

"I understand you. You ask me, in fact, if I had ever loved any one sufficiently to ask her to be my wife. No, I had not. My love was for the day, not for all time. I have never asked any one to marry me, for the simple, sufficient reason that I have never seen any one whom I should have cared to marry."

"And are you very unhappy with me?" she asked gently.

"What a strange question! Unhappy? Well, I cannot quite say that. I am, now that I have been grateful to you, and now that I find you have been victimized, I am sorry for you."

"It is better to be asked if I ask you another question," she said, with down-drooping eyes and flushing cheeks. "Now that our marriage is an accomplished fact, do you not think that we might make the best of it—might try to forget this wretched beginning?"

He looked at her thoughtfully.

"I might deceive you—I might say 'Yes,' and play you false; but I will not. You are good for that. No, not in the sense you mean—not to love you as a man should love his wife—never! You must forgive me if these seem hard words—you have asked me for them."

"It is better to speak frankly; then we shall both know what we are doing." She dropped the silvery veil that shrouded her head and face. "Will you tell me," she asked meekly, "why you cannot care for me? Am I not fair enough to please you?"

"Yes, you are fair enough; but love is not to be taught or bought—it comes unperceived. I cannot express myself well on the subject, but I am sure you are absurd for a man to say to himself, 'It is my duty to fall in love with such a woman, and so I must do it.'"

"But if that woman were his wife?" she suggested gently.

"No man can love against his will, wife or no wife," he was the ready reply.

"Then, Lord Carven, am I to live in your house always an unloved, uncared-for wife?"

"The fault is not mine," he replied. "I believed that your father had explained to you that the whole affair was—was a mistake. Believing that, I married you; and I cannot but be disappointed. I pity myself and I pity you, my lady. I despise myself now for what I have done. If I had to choose again, I should choose disgrace or death."

The night wind sighed around them, the silver light died away, the moon was rising in the sky.

"I am grateful to you," he continued. "I will do all I can to show my gratitude, you are, and I will be, mistress of the whole house. It is yours in so far as money has saved it; you shall have every desire of your heart, every wish gratified. Your position is one of the highest in the land. You shall have entire liberty to go as you like, you shall have entire liberty to visit whom you like, you shall go abroad when you will, and remain at home when you will. You shall be your own mistress in every respect. I will at ways see that every honor is paid you."

"In short," she said, "you will give me everything but love?"

"Well, if you choose to put it in that light."

"I accept the terms," she said gently. "There are many women who have to find the happiness of their lives in the fulfilment of duty. I must do the same."

"You are a very sensible girl," commented Lord Carven, "and I begin to think it is all for the best that we have had this conversation."

"I am sure of it; it will prevent my doing anything of any kind of way, and I shall know better how to understand matters. She raised her head with wondrous grace. "It would be very strange," she added, "if you fell in love, with me after all. Pleasant reflections?"

He saw the purple velvet and silvery veil disappear amongst the trees.

"It is a thousand pities that she is a money lender's daughter," he said "and a

FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DORA THORNTON," "WIFE IN RAIN ONLY," "A BRIDE FROM THE SEA," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

A beautiful morning in October; it was as though some of the warmth and sweetness of summer had returned for a while. The sky was blue, the colors of the sunset were gorgeous, the foliage of the trees was magnificent, autumn flowers were blooming, autumn tints were over the land. The day had been unusually warm and sunny. Lord Carven had invited some friends to dinner; as they lived at some little distance, and they could not remain for the night, dinner was ordered earlier than usual. It was only twilight when the guests drove away, and Lord Carven, having none to play at billiards with him, sauntered restlessly through the rooms, thinking to himself how foolish he had been not to provide himself with a companion for that most interesting of all games.

"I must not let this happen again," he said. "To live here alone requires more strength of mind than I am possessed of."

It did not occur to him that he was not alone; that he had a fair young wife near him. He never thought of her at all. He would not have remembered her existence but that wandering aimlessly along the terrace, he saw her in the drawing-room.

He almost owned to himself that there could not have been a lovelier picture. Wishing to finish something she was reading, she had brought her book to the window and crossed down the stairs, a shining wealth of dark hair in which lay gleaming pearls, a flowing mass of purple velvet upon which the white arms shown like snow on a purple sea. The lovely figure, the graceful attitude, the picturesque dress, cut square in the front, leaving the white neck bare, the wide hanging sleeves, the slender white hands—all made a picture that he must have admired, had the subject been any other than the money lender's daughter.

Seeing her, he thought it was possible she understood something of billiards, although he never knew anything of the game. He saw him, and fancying in his manner that he wished to speak to her, she opened the window and went out to him.

"Will you be kind," he said with unusual thoughtfulness.

She went back to the drawing-room in search of a silver scarf that she used. She threw it carelessly over her head and shoulders, where it looked so picturesque and became her so well that he could not help noticing it.

"This dull work, being here alone," he said.

"It is dull for both of us," she replied briefly.

"Ah, yes! Do you know, I had quite forgotten you were alone as well. We must find it dull too. We will ask some nice people down at once, this kind of thing will never do. I wanted to ask you, do you know anything of billiards?"

"Billiards?" she repeated wonderingly. "Yes—many ladies play remarkably well. Lady Courtney does. It is such a great resource."

"Do you want me to play with you?" she asked quickly.

"Yes, I am bored to death. I am tired of smoking. I never read much, and there is nothing to do."

"Extraordinary," she cried—"nothing to do!"

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean nothing. I am very sorry. I have seen a billiard-table, but I have never played. I will try to learn, if you like."

"Beginners are generally very awkward," he said frankly. "I cannot think how it is that I have forgotten to ask any one over. I must not be so remiss again."

"Do you never amuse yourself," she asked.

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"Do you never amuse yourself," she asked.

"No. How can I? I am essentially a

thousand pities that I cannot love her. She has plenty of character, and she is really handsome, although she is not my style. Lady Carven had gone to her room. She had felt keen, bitter shame while the revelation was made. That had passed away. After all, she was his wife. One man had been a spendthrift, the other was ambitious. Between them she was a victim. She tried to consider quite calmly what she should do.

Some girls, proudly indignant, would have left the house, others would have retaliated fiercely, others have grown sulky and revengeful. She was calm almost to hardness, although a more cruel position could not have been imagined. Even his open confession that he could never care for her had not quite destroyed her love. He was very frank—amongst his sins and imperfections deceit certainly could not be counted. Yet how different it all was from what she had thought! It would be his fault, she felt, and she would be content to atone to herself. "It is almost cruel to write such stories as the histories of Lancelot and Elaine. What a difference between such men as the stainless knight and his husband! There are women living as fair, as tender, as lovely

My Holiday Patient; OR, A DESPERATE CASE.

I am one of those women who, being endowed with a love of knowledge, a disposition to gratify it, and a sense of duty, am, in the eyes of the world, a devoted student of the years which most persons of my sex give to the study of the sciences, and other intellectual attainments.

It is not, however, my purpose in these pages to deliver a homily upon the higher education of women, therefore, leaving to the personal view of each reader the question of its propriety, I will proceed to the simple relation of certain facts which I have undertaken to make public in the following story.

Having taken at a continental university the medical degree which my own country denied me, I quitted forever the scene of my student life, and started on my journey homeward. The fatigue and excitement caused by my recent examinations had impaired my health, and I was obliged to spend a fortnight in three weeks in a holiday ramble through a few of the liveliest and most noted of the many tourist resorts in Germany. It was late Autumn, warm and sunny, the very weather for the purpose, and pleasant anticipations of enjoyment lightened my heart as I completed the first stage of my journey, and entered the portals of the chief hotel at the little lake town I had chosen as my resting place for that night.

When I had removed my traveling dress and ordered my dinner, the waiter brought me the hotel visitor's book, an official looking tome of portentious size, in which he politely requested me to write my name, and it was with a feeling of natural and irrepressible gratification which the sympathetic reader will surely condone, that I found myself for the first time in my life enabled to make public use of the honorable prefix my late toils had earned, and to sign myself, to the intense admiration of the waiter, "Dr. Mary Thornton."

The hotel proved to be so comfortable, and the town so agreeable, that I speedily resolved to prolong my stay. Luxuriating in a new sense of idleness and irresponsibility, I amused myself by observing the habits and appearance of the tourists who came and went at the house, and in a very short time had begun to take special interest in a certain English party who had arrived only a few days before myself, and who occupied rooms upon my floor. This party consisted of a gentleman in the prime of life, tall and well bred in manner, who sat next me every day at the table d'hôte, a pale, fragile looking lady, evidently an invalid, who took all her meals in her own room, and a serving maid, whose manner was somewhat pert, and whose aspect I thought unimpressing. My interest in the gentleman was entirely due to the concern I felt for his wife, and to the compassion awakened in me by the sight of her sweet cold face and emaciated form. Her feeble condition appeared to preclude her not only from frequenting the public rooms downstairs, but even from outdoor exercise, save on very rare occasions when she was accompanied by her husband. More often I met her in the corridor, leading to her apartment, promenading to and fro on the arm of her maid, and wearing a certain subdued and mournful look which seemed never to vary, and which caused my heart to yearn so earnestly towards her, that I could not my glance involuntarily express the warmth of my compassion. One afternoon, as I sat at the open window of the visitors' salon, sunning myself in the warm October light, and lazily toying with a German novel, the pale lady's husband passed through the room, carrying his hat and cane, and went out into the street. Not ten minutes afterwards the serving maid entered, and to my great surprise walked up to me without the least hesitation, and handed me a note bearing the inscription, "Dr. Mary Thornton."

"From my mistress, ma'am," said she, and stood waiting.

Much perplexed, I opened the missive, and found that it contained, written in German, and in a fine, delicate hand, indicative of timidity and weakness of character, ran as follows:

"Pray pardon the liberty I take in addressing you thus, and judge if the excuse I have to offer does not justify my lack of ceremony. I have learned from the hotel servants that you are a physician, and beg

that you will be so kind as to favor me with a professional visit, with an little time as possible. The language in which I write is unknown to my maid, but I am aware that you are conversant with it, and it is extremely important that the purport of this note, and your visit to me—if you are good enough to comply with my request—should be conveyed from both her and Dr. Pomeroy (the gentleman whom you have seen with me). He is so kind, therefore, as to pretend that I have remained in your old friend or school fellow whose acquaintance I wish to renew, and come to my room in that character. The room with which my maid, she will leave in, together. We can then converse at our ease, and I shall be able to explain to you the very grave reasons which compel me to observe this secrecy on the subject of your profession. The kindly encouragement I have addressed to your face and name, whenever we have chanced to meet, each other, assures me that I may count on your timely help and advice."

At a moment when the maid handed me this letter, the attention was certainly not attracted by its personal. My first impulse was, it must be confessed, to decline any participation in an affair which my interest told me promised to be of an exceedingly unpleasant and entirely nature. But, this self-consideration, speedily yielded to more worthy feelings. I recalled the pallid face and the wasted form, the sadness and depression of manner which had so often tormented me in the poor lady, and the generous impulse to meet me to encounter any adventure which might avail me on behalf of so interesting a patient. I drew a pencil from my pocket, and wrote in German upon the blank sheet of her letter.

"I will come at once. Rely on my ob-

serving your caution."

MARY THORNTON.

Then, adopting my correspondent's suggestion, I said, as I put my answer into the maid's hand, "Your mistress is, I find, an old school fellow of mine. She recognized me, and wishes me to go and see her. This is to say I am coming." In speaking these words I assumed a foreign mode of pronunciation, intending, by the affectionate familiarity and intimacy to her the use of that language in the note she had brought me.

Evidently unsuspicious, the maid retired with my message, and after a brief interval sufficient to prepare her mistress for my arrival, I proceeded upstairs, tapped lightly at the invalid's door, and was at once admitted.

She was seated in an arm-chair, her head resting on cushion, her hands hanging listlessly at her sides, and with an appearance exhibiting melancholy and exhaustion. Upon seeing me enter the room she made a slight movement like an attempt to rise, and a sudden flush appeared her cheeks and throat.

"Do not disturb yourself, pray!" cried I, still using my broken English for the edification of the maid, who stood beside her mistress, "you must not use any ceremony to me. Ah, how glad I am to see you again!"

She cast a grateful look at me, murmured a few unintelligible words, and motioned me to a chair opposite her own. In order to sit at her ease, and facilitate the course of our plot, I tarried on the conversation for some minutes in the elaborate assigned to me, touching on a variety of indifferent subjects, and assuming an interest in her remarks, which I was obliged to maintain, with the view of concealing my true purpose, and of making her feel that I was not a stranger. I was, however, so much interested in her conversation, that I was obliged to make a great effort to restrain myself from asking her to tell me what it was that she was so much interested in.

"Thank God you have come!" I am a dying woman. Before you say anything to me, hear what I have to tell you."

I needed no hint. She leaned back in her seat, drew a deep breath, and began to speak rapidly in German, with the same keen voice which at times spoke to me as from a trance, and, bending suddenly forward, caught me eagerly by both hands, lifted her sunken eyes to mine, and, whispering in a voice that seemed to quiver with emotion, said:

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that you will be so kind as to favor me with a professional visit, with an little time as possible. The language in which I write is unknown to my maid, but I am aware that you are conversant with it, and it is extremely important that the purport of this note, and your visit to me—if you are good enough to comply with my request—should be conveyed from both her and Dr. Pomeroy (the gentleman whom you have seen with me). He is so kind, therefore, as to pretend that I have remained in your old friend or school fellow whose acquaintance I wish to renew, and come to my room in that character. The room with which my maid, she will leave in, together. We can then converse at our ease, and I shall be able to explain to you the very grave reasons which compel me to observe this secrecy on the subject of your profession. The kindly encouragement I have addressed to your face and name, whenever we have chanced to meet, each other, assures me that I may count on your timely help and advice."

At a moment when the maid handed me this letter, the attention was certainly not attracted by its personal. My first impulse was, it must be confessed, to decline any participation in an affair which my interest told me promised to be of an exceedingly unpleasant and entirely nature. But, this self-consideration, speedily yielded to more worthy feelings. I recalled the pallid face and the wasted form, the sadness and depression of manner which had so often tormented me in the poor lady, and the generous impulse to meet me to encounter any adventure which might avail me on behalf of so interesting a patient. I drew a pencil from my pocket, and wrote in German upon the blank sheet of her letter.

"I will come at once. Rely on my ob-

serving your caution."

MARY THORNTON.

Then, adopting my correspondent's suggestion, I said, as I put my answer into the maid's hand, "Your mistress is, I find, an old school fellow of mine. She recognized me, and wishes me to go and see her. This is to say I am coming." In speaking these words I assumed a foreign mode of pronunciation, intending, by the affectionate familiarity and intimacy to her the use of that language in the note she had brought me.

Evidently unsuspicious, the maid retired with my message, and after a brief interval sufficient to prepare her mistress for my arrival, I proceeded upstairs, tapped lightly at the invalid's door, and was at once admitted.

She was seated in an arm-chair, her head resting on cushion, her hands hanging listlessly at her sides, and with an appearance exhibiting melancholy and exhaustion. Upon seeing me enter the room she made a slight movement like an attempt to rise, and a sudden flush appeared her cheeks and throat.

"Do not disturb yourself, pray!" cried I, still using my broken English for the edification of the maid, who stood beside her mistress, "you must not use any ceremony to me. Ah, how glad I am to see you again!"

She cast a grateful look at me, murmured a few unintelligible words, and motioned me to a chair opposite her own. In order to sit at her ease, and facilitate the course of our plot, I tarried on the conversation for some minutes in the elaborate assigned to me, touching on a variety of indifferent subjects, and assuming an interest in her remarks, which I was obliged to maintain, with the view of concealing my true purpose, and of making her feel that I was not a stranger. I was, however, so much interested in her conversation, that I was obliged to make a great effort to restrain myself from asking her to tell me what it was that she was so much interested in.

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There never did, and there never will, exist anything permanently noble and exalted in the character which is common to the masses of men.

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